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SIPDIS

DEPT FOR IO/HR, DRL/MLGA

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: PHUM PREL UN AG

SUBJECT: ALGERIA'S THIRD COMMITTEE RECORD UNLIKELY TO CHANGE

REF: STATE 108921

¶1. We delivered reftel points November 4 to MFA Deputy Director of Human Rights and Humanitarian Assistance Ahmed Saadi. Saadi said that Algeria, as a matter of principle, did not support country-specific resolutions in the Third Committee. Dialogue and engagement were more effective approaches than using resolutions to "single out" countries for bad behavior. He predicted Algeria's position on the Iran, Burma and North Korea resolutions would not change from prior years. Saadi said, however, that Algeria had supported the biennial U.S. elections resolution in the past and would do so again during this session.

¶2. To our request to postpone the Defamation of Religions resolution Saadi said Algeria that would first consider the OIC's position. Saadi acknowledged U.S. concerns and agreed that the outcome of the U.S./Egypt freedom of expression resolution in the Human Rights Council was an encouraging precedent. However, Saadi argued the OIC showed considerable flexibility last year during negotiations of the resolution on the elimination of intolerance and discrimination based on religion or belief. He hoped the U.S. could demonstrate similar flexibility with respect to defamation of religion.

PEARCE